THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ELECTRONICS AND OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government has taken several measures which include fiscal benefits, infrastructure development, manpower development and quality and productivity enhancement to enable the software industry to grow and realise its full potential.

Service charges/commission paid by HPC

*234. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether M/s Hindustan Paper Corporation has paid service charges/commission to any of its dealers against the supply of paper made to NCERT during the course of last three years; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the same, the names of the dealers and the amount paid to each of them?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI K KARUNAKARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Hindustan Paper Corporation (HPC) have paid service charges of Rs. 40.57 lakhs so far out of the total due of Rs. 41.40 lakhs to their service agent, namely M/s B.N. Paper Co. during the year 1994-95 against supply of 6929 tons of paper to NCERT.

Interim Relief to Widows/Widowers

*235. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN:
SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether benefit of Interim Relief will also be granted to the widows/widowers drawing ex-gratia pension of Rupees 150 per month only on account of death of the CPF beneficiaries of railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to consider their case favourably?

THE MINSITER OF STATE IN THE MINSITRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SMT. MARGARET ALVA): (a) to (c) a proposal to this effect is already under consideration of the Government and the same is likely to be decided upon soon.

Indigenisation of Defence Stores and Equipment

*236. SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to attain 80 per cent indigenisation in respect of Defence Stores and Equipment by 2005 A.D.;

(b) if so, the details thereof with background;

(c) whether Government propose to take some measure to achieve this objective; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) a 10-year plan for Self-Reliance in Defence Systems has been evolved with aim to increase the self-reliance index (the ratio of expenditure on defence systems procured from indigenous sources to the total expenditure on acquisitions in a particular year) from the present level of 30 percent to 70 percent by the year 2005.

(b) The plan has been evolved in the background of post cold war geo-political environment, difficulties in procurement of spares for defence systems from the erstwhile USSR/East-European countries

and the export-embargo regime being adopted by industrially advanced countries.

The plan envisages the following three-pronged thrust for achieving increased self-reliance:—

(i) sustaining existing defence systems through indigenisation of spares,

(ii) upgrading viable existing defence systems and stretching their life and capability, and

(iii) inducting more of indigenous defence sytems in a progressive manner and minimising the import of major systems.

(c)Yes, Sir.

(d) A "Self-Reliance Implementation Council" has been constituted by the Government under the Chairmanship of Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri and with senior officers from various wings of Ministry of Defence including Services as members. In addition, the existing Defence Research and Development Council, with Raksha Mantri as Chairman, has been entrusted the following additional role:—

(i) pooling national expertise and infrastructural strengths,

(ii) ensuring priorities for self-reliance programmes,

(iii) promoting consortia approach to maximise exploitation of national technological strengths.

Fire accidents in fireworks and cracker units

*237. DR. RANBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether fire accidents are regularly taking place in the fireworks/cracker units in one or the other part of the country;

(b) if so, how many accidents have taken place in the last three years, and how many of these accidents were enquired into, with what results and how many people were killed therein;

(c) what have been the main causes of these accidents and how is it proposed to contain such accidents in times to come; and

(d) whether the rules on the explosives are violated with impunity and there is nexus between the staff of the explosives departments, the manfuacturers and the wholesale dealers?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN): (a) and (b) The number of accidents that have occured in fire cracker units licensed by the Department of Explosives during the past 3 years is as follows:—

Year	No. of accidents	No. of accidents investigated	No. of persons killed
1992-93	7	6	24
1993-94	3	3	3
1994-95	9	9	23

(c) and (d) As established by investigations, the accidents in the premises licensed by Department of Explosives were mainly due to presence of grit in composition, impact by sub-standard tools and careless action on the part of some workers. It is proposed to contain recurrence of such accidents by rigorously enforcing the provisions of the relevant Act and rules. Cases have not come to notice indicating a nexus between the staff of the Explosives Department, manufacturers and wholesale dealers.